

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 6788

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJECT: POLAND AND THE VATICAN

REF: ROME 13528

1. AS SEEN FROM HERE, IT APPEARS THAT OF THE
THREE PARTIES ENGAGED IN THE TRIANGULAR NEGOTIATIONS
CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICIAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE VATICAN AND THE GOP, ONLY THE VATICAN
IS IN ANY HURRY TO CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT. THE
DEATH OF POPE PAUL WILL CERTAINLY COMPLICATE AND
PERHAPS CHANGE THE PICTURE. MONTHS MAY PASS BEFORE
IT BECOMES CLEAR WHETHER THE NEXT POPE CHOOSES TO
CONTINUE POPE PAUL'S OSTPOLITIK.

2. OFFICIAL POLISH EPISCOPATE SOURCES AGREE THAT
LITTLE PROGRESS ON NORMALIZING GOP-VATICAN RELATIONS
WAS MADE DURING ARCHBISHOP POGGI'S STAY IN POLAND
MAY 23 - JUNE 6. THESE SOURCES INSIST THAT THE
VATICAN AND THE EPISCOPATE SHARE IDENTICAL VIEWS
ON ALL TOPICS WHICH WERE UNDER DISCUSSION DURING
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THE VISIT. IN PARTICULAR, THEY CLAIM THE VATICAN
HAS MADE GOP RECOGNITION OF THE JURIDICAL STATUS OF
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND AS A LEGAL BODY
A CONDITION FOR CONCLUDING AN AGREEMENT. THESE
OFFICIAL SOURCES ALSO DENY THAT CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI
HAS INTERPOSED OBJECTIONS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
VATICAN REPRESENTATION IN POLAND. IN FACT, THEY

ASSERT, WYSZYNSKI PLAYS NO ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, INSTEAD ENTRUSTING BISHOP BRONISLAW DABROWSKI, THE EPISCOPATE SECRETARY, WITH FULL RESPONSIBILITY TO REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THE EPISCOPATE.

3. A SOURCE IN THE GOP OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS BELITTLED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POGGI VISIT. HE SAID THE TEMPO OF NEGOTIATIONS TO NORMALIZE GOP-VATICAN RELATIONS HAS SLOWED DOWN CONSIDERABLY. IN HIS VIEW, THE VATICAN'S OSTPOLITIK IS RUNNING OUT OF STEAM. SPEAKING A FEW DAYS BEFORE POPE PAUL'S DEATH, HE IMPLIED THAT SINCE THE PONTIFF'S DAYS WERE NUMBERED, THE GOP PREFERS TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT POLICY TOWARDS EASTERN EUROPE HIS SUCCESSOR WILL PURSUE. FOR THE TIME BEING, THE SOURCE CONTINUED, THE GOP IS SATISFIED WITH THE "WORKING CONTACTS" REFERRED TO IN THE KAKOL INTERVIEW CITED IN REFTEL. THE GOP WELCOMES VISITS FROM POGGI OR HIS SUCCESSOR, THE SOURCE CONCLUDED, BUT SEES NO IMMINENT NEED TO MOVE THE TALKS TO A HIGHER PLANE.

4. THE PRE-WAR RESIDENCE OF THE APOSTOLIC DELEGATE TO POLAND, WHICH CURRENTLY HOUSES THE INFORMATION OFFICE OF THE EPISCOPATE, IS BEING REPAIRED FOR EVENTUAL USE BY A VATICAN REPRESENTATIVE IN WARSAW. POGGI IS EXPECTED TO RETURN TO POLAND FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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ANOTHER ROUND OF TALKS AT A DATE TO BE DETERMINED IN THE FALL, BUT NO ONE WE CONSULTED IN THE EPISCOPATE PROFESSED TO KNOW WHETHER HE WOULD TAKE UP RESIDENCE THEN.

5. COMMENT: OF THE TWO POSSIBILITIES MENTIONED IN REFTEL REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF EVENTUAL VATICAN REPRESENTATION IN WARSAW, WE THINK AN OFFICE OF THE VATICAN COMMISSION FOR PERMANENT WORKING CONTACTS WITH THE GOP IS MORE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE, FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, BOTH TO THE EPISCOPATE AND THE REGIME. CHURCH OFFICIALS' DENIALS OF WYSZYNSKI'S RELATIONS DO NOT PUT SUCH RUMORS TO REST, BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE CARDINAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE QUESTION IS UNKNOWN, AS IN THE DEGREE TO WHICH HE MAY BE TAKING PART IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. CERTAINLY, ELEMENTS WITHIN THE POLISH CHURCH, PRIMARILY AMONG THE OLDER CLERGY, HAVE OPPOSED AND STILL OPPOSE THE OSTPOLITIK OF THE VATICAN, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE THEIR STRENGTH AND ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE POLICY OF THE HIERARCHY. IF, AS EPISCOPATE SOURCES CLAIM, THE VATICAN HAS MADE GOP RECOGNITION OF THE

JURIDICAL STATUS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND
A CONDITION FOR THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT,
PROGRESS TOWARD NORMALIZING VATICAN-GOP RELATIONS
WILL PROBABLY SLOW TO A GLACIAL PACE BECAUSE THE
GOP IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO CONCEDE A POINT THAT
WOULD IN FACT MEAN THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH
TO ITS PRE - WAR STATUS IN POLAND. THE NEXT MOVE
APPEARS TO BE UP TO THE VATICAN. END COMMENT.
SCHAUFELLE

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